



NO. 70
OCT '00

ROBINSON
SNEJBERG

GRAND GUIGNOL: 9

STARMAN



FROM THE SHADE'S
JOURNAL...

It's good to
be back.

Back in my head. My
heart. Knowing that I'm
sane (relatively). Knowing
the murders that caused the
specter of suspicion to first
fall upon me...

...and the web of evil
spun so intricately about
my beloved Opal City...

...the blackness that
covers her spires...

...that none of this was
me. True, I am no saint,
but this....

...this grows from the
guile of Simon Culp.

My foe...my enemy
since the moment of my
creation.

The blackness manifests
itself more with each
passing moment.

It threatens to consume
my berg, dragging it into
a bottomless netherworld.

An hour...perhaps less and
Culp's arcane spite will take
the city from Earth forever.

There is hope,
of course...

Jack Knight and the
city's champions sally
forth, each with a goal.

A target to vanquish...
or be vanquished by.

They are Opal's hope
...its only hope.

Now read
on...

Grand Guignol
Dixième Partie

The Devil's in
The Details

ROBINSON writer • SNEJBURG artist • OAKLEY letterer • WRIGHT colorist • JAMISON seps • WILLIAMS assistant ed. • TOMASI editor • GOODWIN guiding light • Jack Knight created by Robinson & Harris

Bobo Bennett and
Crusher met to joust
upon the roof of Coeur
de Cite.

How they arrived
there is anyone's
guess.



HEY,
BEAUTIFUL.
HAD ENOUGH?



NOT MUCH OF A
TALKER, ARE
YOU?

YOU CAN THANK YOUR
LUCKY STARS THE ERA
OF THE RADIO ENTER-
TAINER IS *DONE*,
BUDDY.

BET YOUR
CROONING
AIN'T UP TO
MUCH,
EITHER.

THING
I *DO* KNOW
YOU'RE *GOOD*
AT...

YOU LIKE
GIVING
PAIN...



"...HAD SOME FUN WITH ME, DIDN'T YOU, DADDY?"



A MEMORY... FROM THAT FLASH OF RECOLLECTION... PAIN AT CRUSHER'S HANDS...



...TO PAIN OF A DIFFERENT KIND... JAKE BENNETTI'S OWN WIFE...

...WHO HE LOVED AND KILLED IN RAGE AND LOVES STILL DESPITE THIS.



HE MISSES HER. HE MISSES HER SO MUCH.

PAYBACK'S A BITCH, huh?



Jack Knight and Smudge...their quest is greater...perhaps the most important of all.

They seek Culp.

ARE YOU SURE THIS IS THE WAY, SMUDGE?

TO CULP'S RITE, SIR JACK? AS A DARK FEY... A SHADOW WRAITH, I CAN SENSE THE HEART OF IT.

THE BLACKNESS... IT'S BECOME ELEMENTAL. THE WIND... WHERE'S IT EVEN COMING FROM? OPAL'S SEALED IN!

I THINK IT'S A SIGN THAT THE PORTAL INTO THE VOID DIMENSION IS BEGINNING TO OPEN.

THE BLACKNESS ABOVE IS SINKING, HAVE YOU NOTICED THAT?

MAY I BE SO BOLD AND CORRECT YOUR PERCEPTIVE EYE, SIR JACK? THE BLACKNESS ISN'T SINKING, IT'S GROWING DOWN TOWARDS US... EXPANDING, IF YOU WILL.

I HOPED IT WAS MY IMAGINATION.

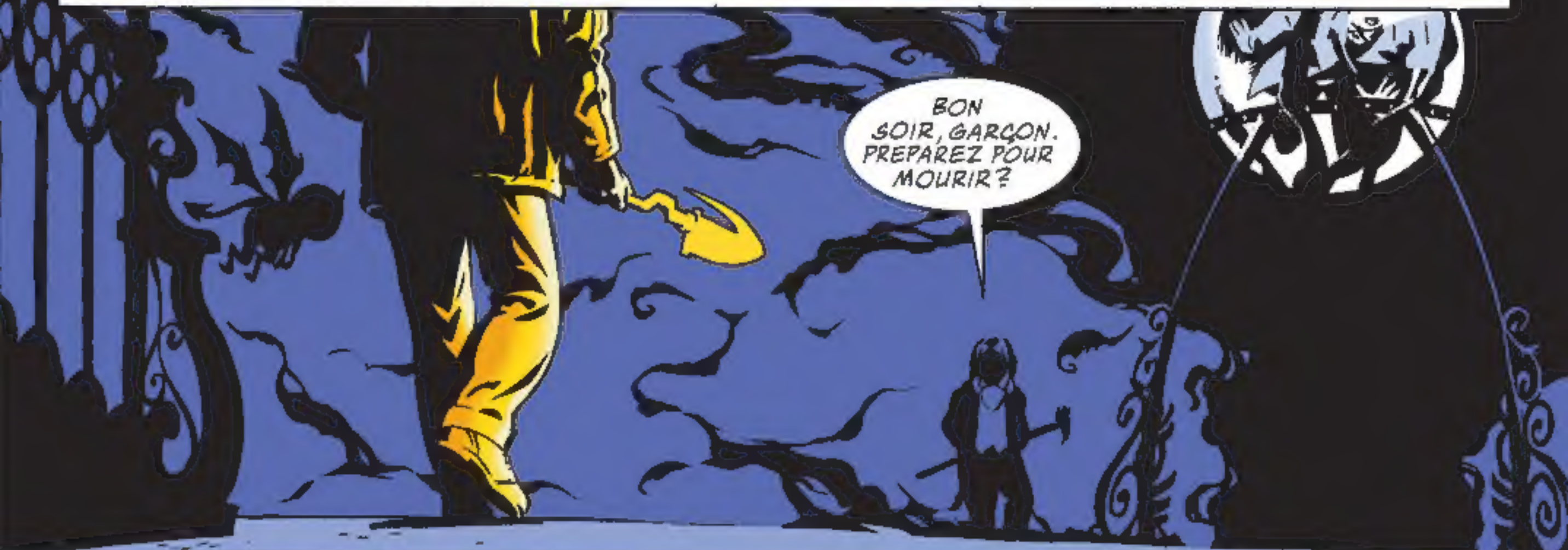
HEY, SMUDGE... ERR... NO OFFENSE, BUT...

... HOW CAN I TRUST YOU? I MEAN, HOW DO I KNOW YOU'RE NOT IN LEAGUE WITH CULP? HOW DO I KNOW THIS ISN'T A TRAP?

YOU DON'T.



HERE.
WHAT IS THIS?
AN
ADJUNCT
TO TYLER
LABORATORIES,
LONG DESERTED.
ITS VAULTS ARE
DEEP.



BON
SOIR, GARÇON.
PREPAREZ POUR
MOURIR?



PAS AUJOURD'HUI,
MOITIE-PINTE.

VOUS N'AVEZ PAS
UNE PRIERE ?

PEUT-
ETRE JE PRIE
A UN DIEU
DIFFERENT



ALLONS, "BOUT
DROIT," LUMIERE
CONTRE LE
DARKNESS.
LAISSE FONT'LE
HUSTLE'!

The 5 Point Radio Building.



THE RADIO. THEY HAVE THE CITY'S TELEVISION CABLES, BUT IF WE CAN REACH ANY COPS STILL LIVING... IN HIDING... WHO STILL HAVE THE STONES TO TRY RETAKING THE STREETS...

...WE HAVE A CHANCE.



While I remained a prisoner.

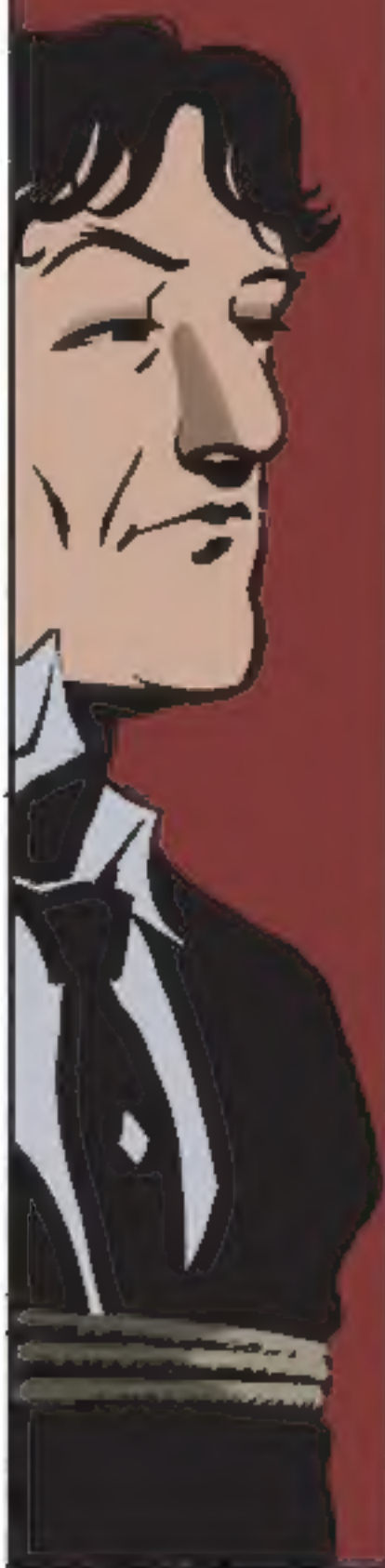
Bound. Powerless...my shadow abilities tear from me...absorbed by Culp.

My captor was a Ludlow. The son of the original Spider...indeed the son of his father.

SO THIS IS ALL VERY JOLLY. ALL VERY...



...ANYWAY, I AM GETTING BORED. I DON'T SUPPOSE YOU'D MIND GOING FOR COFFEE?



THWACK



I GATHER YOU DO.



I'VE BEEN ON CIVIL TERMS WITH YOU, SHADE. DESPITE MY HATRED, I'VE NOT EVEN RAISED MY VOICE.



THERE'S NO NEED FOR THAT KIND OF TALK FROM YOU. AS IF YOU'RE NOT SCARED OF DYING...AS IF I'M YOUR ERRAND BOY!

SPIDER... THE TRUTH IS... AND I'M SORRY IF THIS DIS-APPOINTS YOU... I'M CLOSE TO 200 YEARS OLD. I HAVE LIVED SO LONG, DEATH WOULD BE A NOVELTY.

AND AS FOR THE COFFEE REMARK...



I MEANT NO SLIGHT. I REALLY WOULD LIKE A CUP OF COFFEE. THIS PLACE IS CHILLY. WOULDN'T YOU LIKE A WARM DRINK, TOO?



YOU'RE QUITE A CHARMING GUY.

IT'S BEEN SAID. FAR FROM ME TO GUSH ABOUT MYSELF.



OH, YOU'LL GUSH.

PREPARE FOR THAT NOVELTY YOU MENTIONED.





OPAL... ARE YOU LISTENING,
OPAL CITY?

IF ANYONE
IS OUT THERE, ANY
COPS ESPECIALLY,
LISTEN WELL.



THIS IS COMMISSIONER
CLARENCE O'DARE.

I KNOW HOW YOU MUST FEEL...
SO MANY OF YOUR PARTNERS
DEAD. THOSE OF YOU WHO'VE
LIVED TO TELL HAVE FLED TO
YOUR FAMILIES.



I DON'T BLAME
ANY OF YOU.

THE WAR WE FOUGHT WAS
LOST. NO MATTER HOW
VALIANT THE STRUGGLE, WE
LOST IT.

AND TO
THE LOSERS
OF WARS...
THE HOPE OF
VICTORY GONE...
SURVIVAL IS
EVERYTHING.



BUT THE WAR ISN'T
OVER. NOT YET. THIS WAS A BATTLE
LOST IS ALL, NOT THE WAR.

AS I SPEAK TO YOU,
THERE ARE A FEW BRAVE
SOULS WHO FIGHT FOR
OPAL STILL.

SOME
ARE OPAL'S
HEROES.



"SOME ARE VISITORS
WHO MERELY SEE
EVIL AND FIGHT IT AS
HEROES DO."



EITHER WAY, WE OPAL COPS
OWE THEM. AS I SEE IT, WE
ALL OWE THEM.

THE OPAL POLICEMAN
UNDERSTANDS THAT WEARING
THE BADGE ISN'T *JUST* A JOB...
A CAREER.



WE UNDERSTAND
IT'S AN HONOR.

THE EVIL *HERE* IN OUR CITY MIGHT
MAKE US *FEAR* OUR DUTY.

I SAY *FIGHT* THAT FEAR.
SHOW THESE BASTARDS THAT OPAL
HEROES *AREN'T* JUST THOSE WITH
KNIGHT AS THEIR SECOND NAME.



IT'S
EVERY COP
WHO EVER WORE
OPAL BLUE.

JOIN ME. THE *SECOND*
BATTLE BEGINS.

IF OPAL IS *EVER* GOING
TO SEE BLUE SKIES AGAIN,
IT'S A FIGHT WE MUST
WIN.



CLARENCE...

...IT'S *BARRY*.
HE HAS FAITH
AND CHARITY.



WHO?

FAITH IS
CLARENCE'S
WIFE. CHARITY'S
MY ...



...MY FRIEND.





I wasn't there...not for that part of the ballet.

Jack, my understudy in the role I was destined to play. The combatant of Culp. My role of a lifetime spent.

And Jack rose to it.

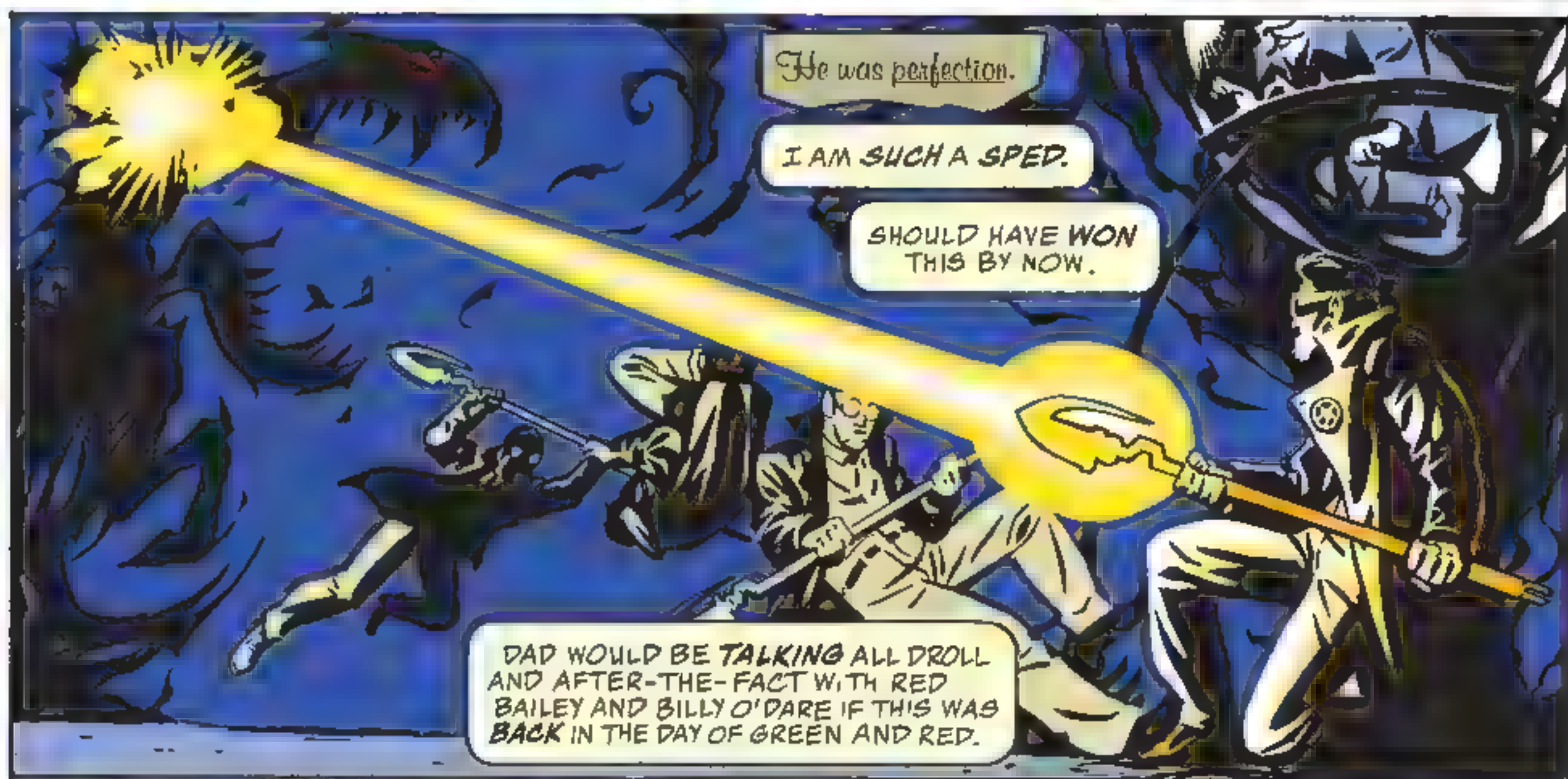


He was magnificent.

I AM *SUCH A LOSER*.

He was fearless.

I THINK I JUST *PEED* MYSELF.



He was perfection.

I AM *SUCH A SPED*.

SHOULD HAVE WON THIS BY NOW.

DAD WOULD BE *TALKING ALL DROLL* AND AFTER-THE-FACT WITH RED BAILEY AND BILLY O'DARE IF THIS WAS *BACK* IN THE DAY OF GREEN AND RED.



THE RITE WAS BEGUN IN YOUR FATHER'S TIME.

WHATEVER THAT MEANS.



DON'T YOU SEE? IT'S BEYOND YOUR ABILITY TO STOP IT.

DOESN'T MEAN I WON'T TRY.



I'VE MET YOU BEFORE, Y'KNOW.

HUH?



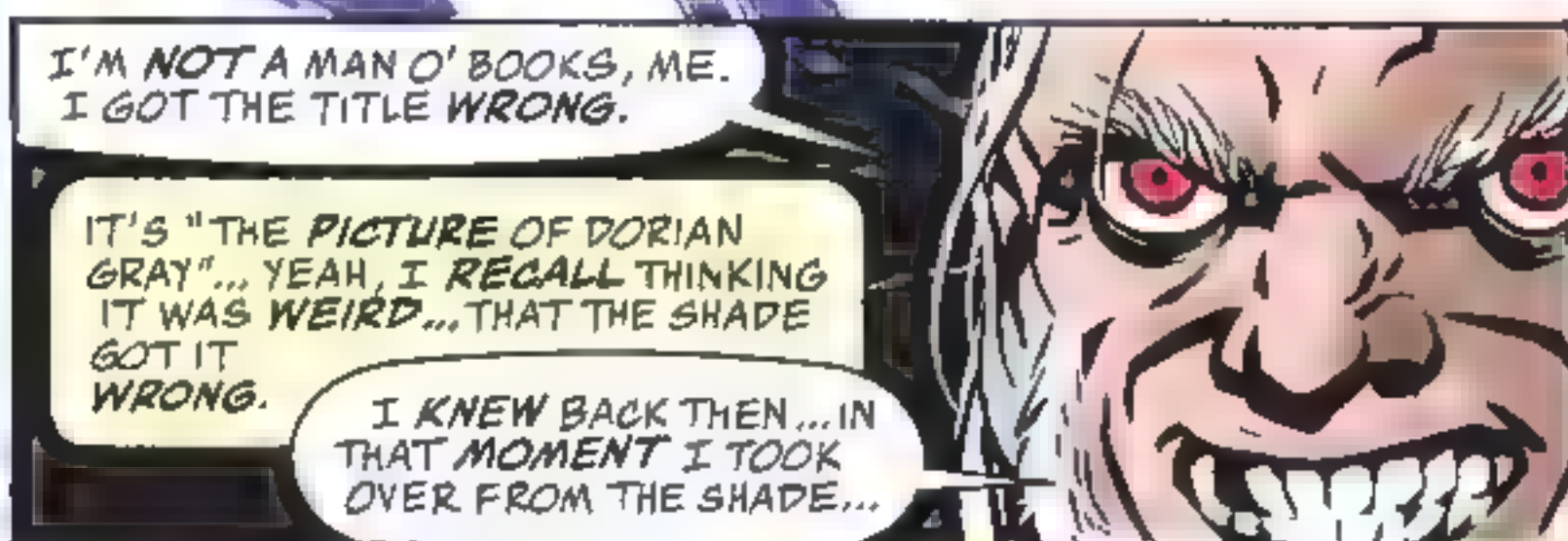
WITHIN THE SHADE'S BODY I TOOK OVER FOR 'N INSTANT BEFORE 'IS SUBCONSCIOUS STATE O' WILL TOOK IT BACK.

HE WAS DISCUSSIN' A BOOK BY OSCAR WILDE.

I TOOK OVER JUST AS HE WAS SAYIN' THE NAME OVIT.



...THE PORTRAIT OF DORIAN GRAY.



I'M NOT A MAN O' BOOKS, ME. I GOT THE TITLE WRONG.

IT'S "THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY"... YEAH, I RECALL THINKING IT WAS WEIRD... THAT THE SHADE GOT IT WRONG.

I KNEW BACK THEN... IN THAT MOMENT I TOOK OVER FROM THE SHADE...



...THAT I'D KILL YOU ONE DAY.

ONE DAY SOMEONE MIGHT... BUT NOT YOU.



AND NOT TODAY.

GOD, I AM LADLING ON THE B.S. I AM SO DEAD, ANY MOMENT.

Jack Knight. As Fearless then as his armored namesake of old.

Adam Strange, man of two worlds, is at his labors...

HE LONGS TO BE GONE FROM HERE.

HE LONGS FOR HIS WIFE'S KISSES AND TO HOLD HIS DAUGHTER TIGHT

BUT HE IS TRAPPED HERE...

...IN HIS TIME SPENT IN OPAL, MISSING TWO ZETA BEAMS WHOSE APPOINTED STRIKES ON EARTH HE WOULD OTHERWISE HAVE MET.

BUT HE OWES JACK KNIGHT

OWES HIM FOR THE LIVES OF WIFE AND DAUGHTER BOTH.

AND IF HE CAN ASSEMBLE THIS TRI-FOLD ZETA TRANSMITTER...AN AMPLIFIED ADVANCEMENT OF THE MEANS OF TRANSPORT HE'S TRAVELED STARWARD FOR MORE YEARS THAN HE CAN RECALL...

...IF OTHERS FREE OPAL OF ITS SABLE ENTRAPMENT SO THE ARMY OF RANN CAN BE BROUGHT TO EARTH...

HIS DEBT WILL BE PAID.



BEFORE THE BLACKNESS ABOVE AND AROUND OPAL FORMED, ADAM HAD SENT A "ZETA-FLASH"... A COMMUNIQUE WITHIN A MICRO-TRANSMIT FORM OF A ZETA-BEAM (ANOTHER OF SARDATH'S RECENT ADVANCEMENTS.) IF ITS AIM FOR RANAGAR WAS TRUE, THE SOLDIERS ARE READY.

IF ALL THIS IS SO... IF ALL THIS IS MADE SO... IF ADAM CAN COMPLETE HIS PART IN ALL AND EVERYTHING THAT HE MUST--

NERVOUS HANDS CONTINUE THEIR WORK. HE KNOWS THAT THE RANNIAN ARMY MIGHT BE NEEDED IN A MOMENT HENCE.



HE DARE NOT REST. HE--

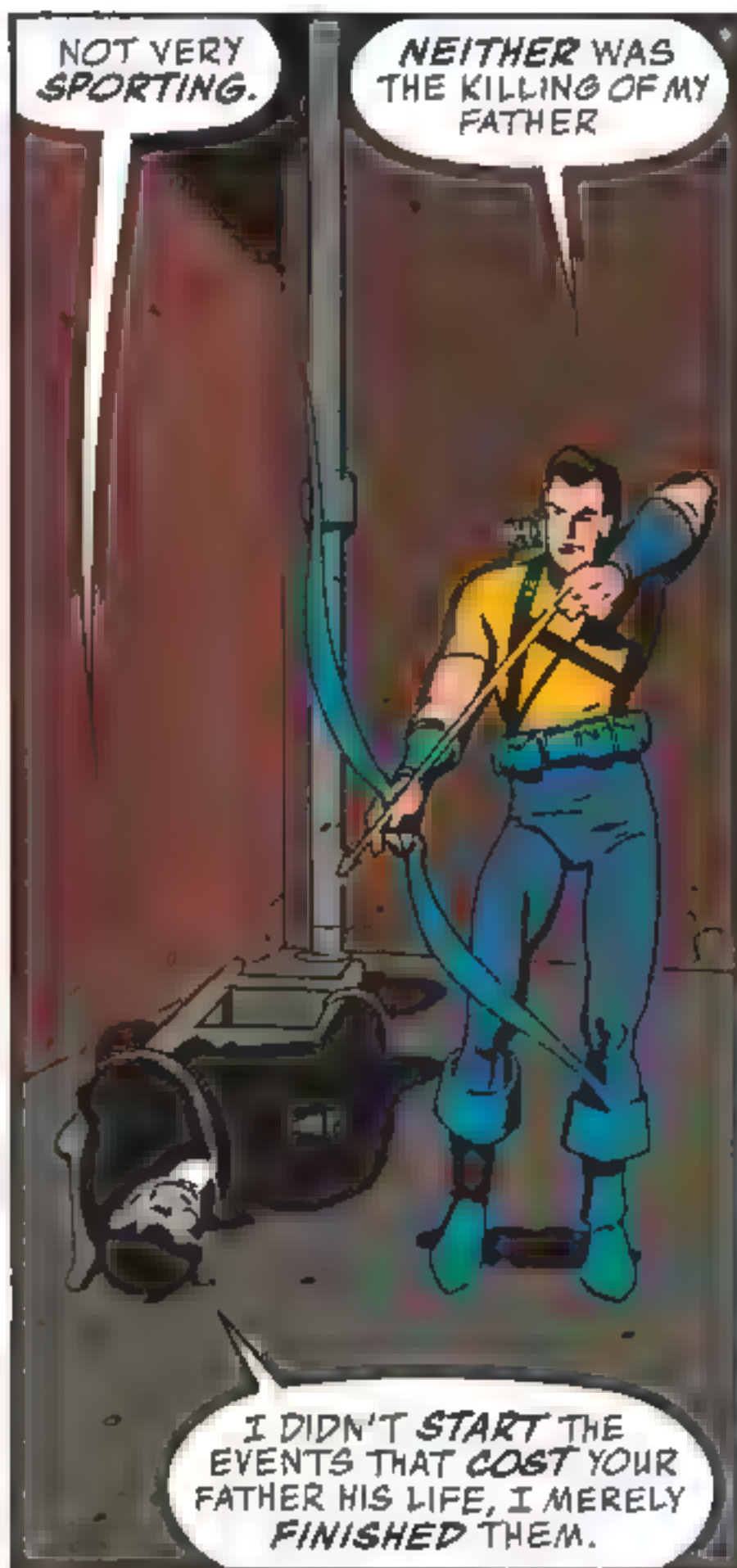


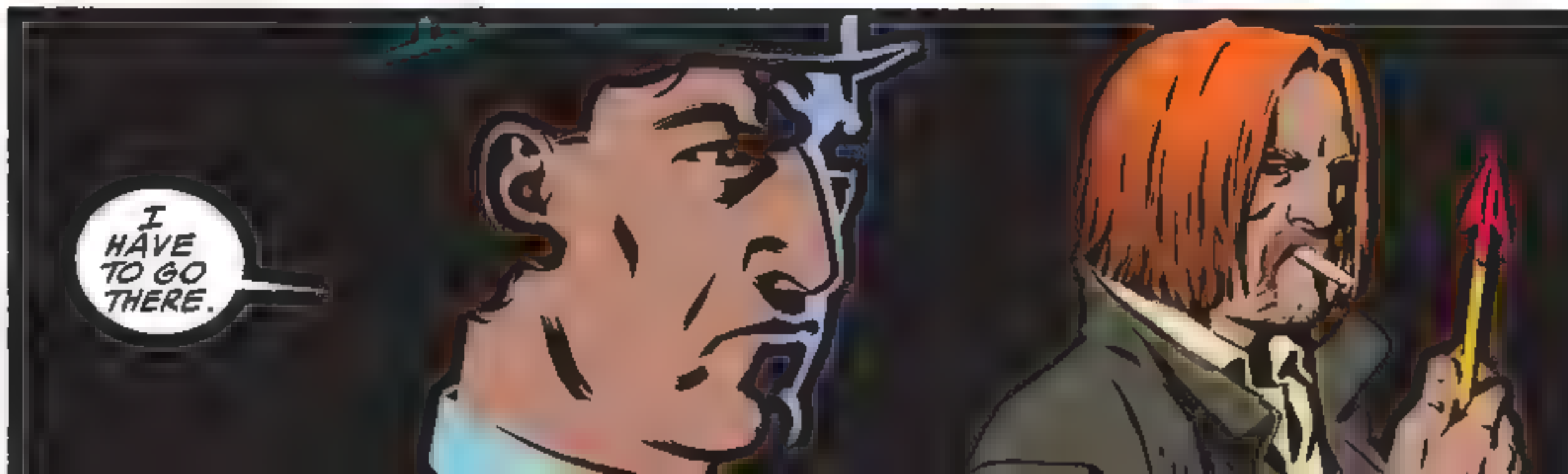
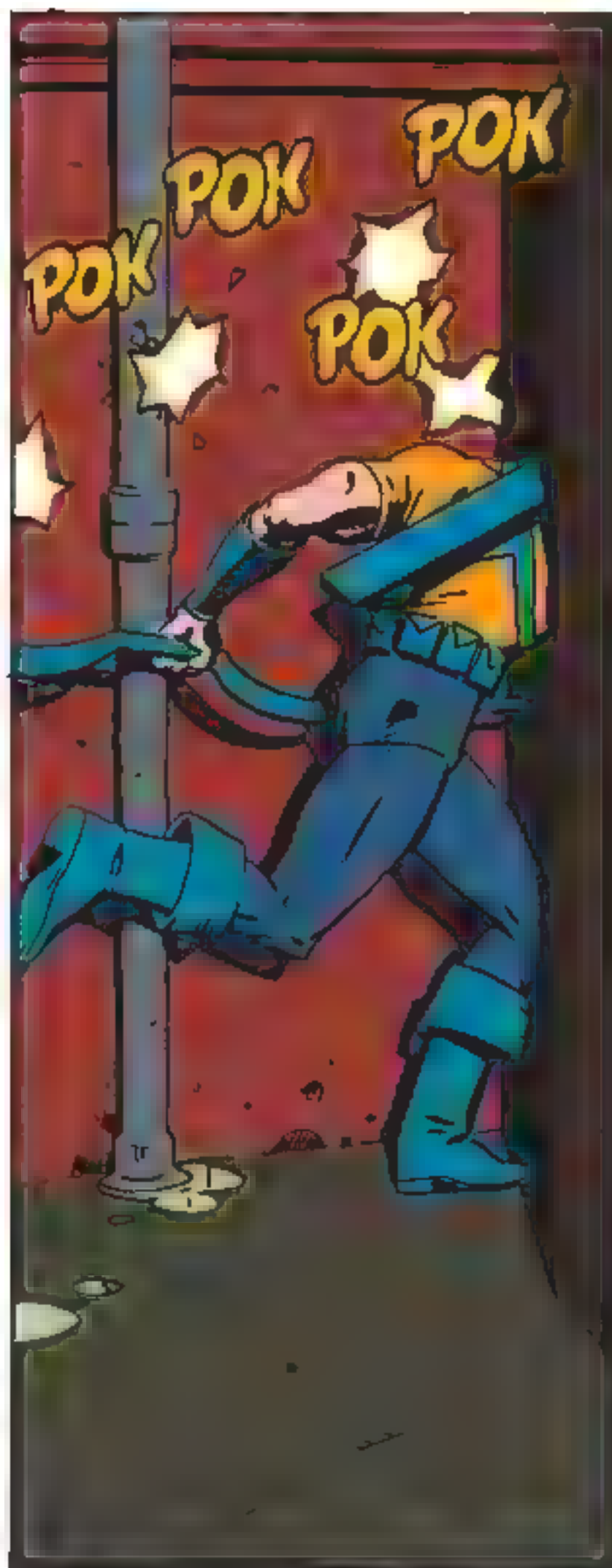
SORRY, TOMMY CORBETT...

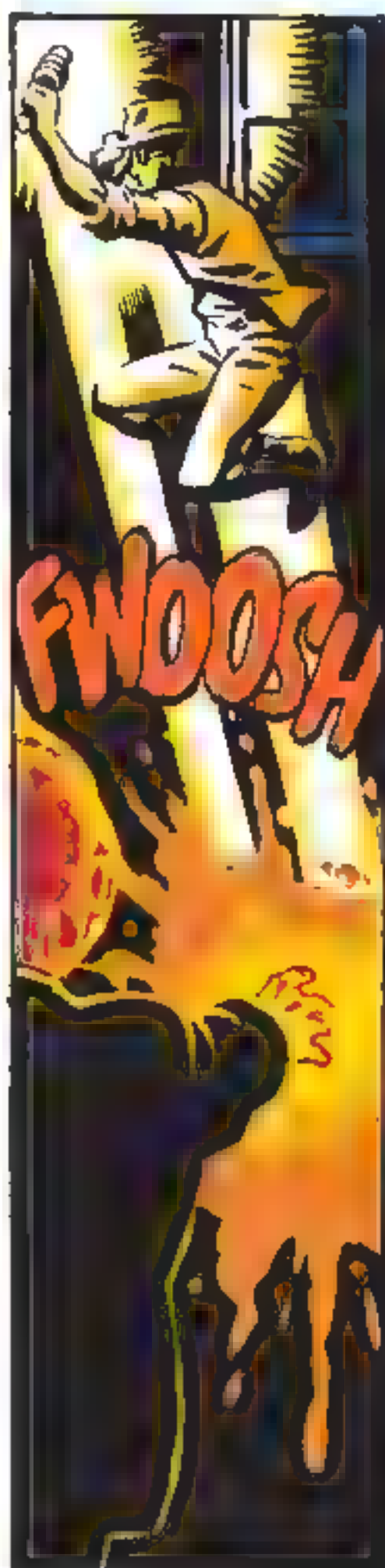
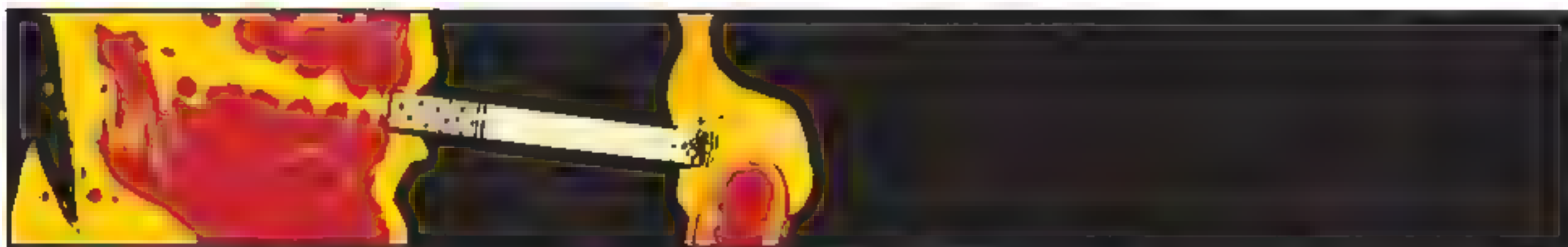
...OR BUCKY ROGERS OR WHOEVER YOU ARE...

YOUR SCIENCE PROJECT GETS GRADED WITH AN "INCOMPLETE."











ON ELLSWORTH WAY
(FAR TO ITS WEST)...

OPAL CITY
BANK
OF COMMERCE

...OLD FRIENDS ARE
REUNITED.

SOLLY.

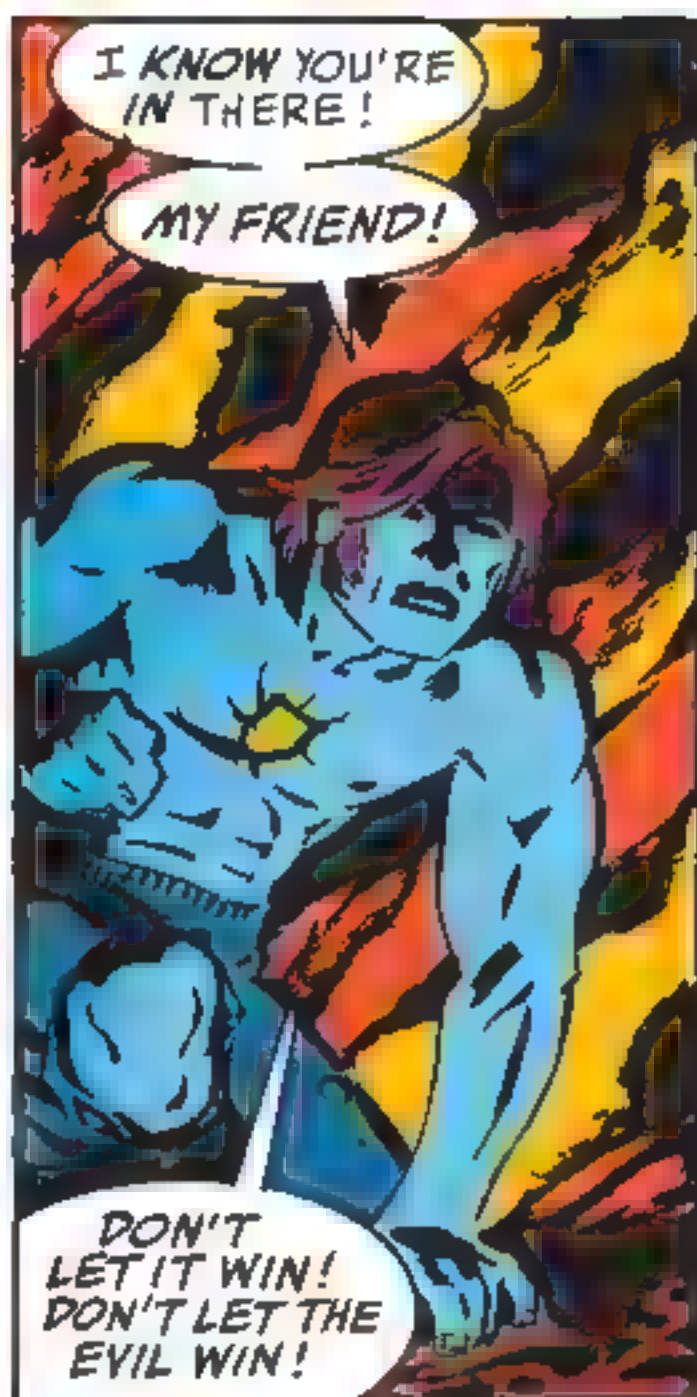
THE FOND EMBRACE.
WARM MEMORY
RENEWED.

WHAMMM

MOMENTS OF THEIR
SHARED PAST...



...THEIR PAST...



I KNOW YOU'RE IN THERE!

MY FRIEND!

DON'T LET IT WIN!
DON'T LET THE EVIL WIN!



YOUR FRIEND IS GONE.
"SOLLY?" WHO'S THAT?



MY NAME IS GRUNDY.

...FOR THE TWO WHO GATHER HERE IT'S LIKE THEIR TIME APART NEVER WAS.



"HE ISN'T YOURS..."



"...YOU CHALKY FREAK!"
LOWIE SOUL THINKS TO HIMSELF



"I'LL KILL THEM BOTH IF I HAVE TO"



"TO NAIL MIKAAL TOMAS...
TO AVENGE MY FATHER... I'D
NUKE THE WHOLE
\$%#*ING WORLD!"

Ralph Dibny met with his idol in things deductive, the time-lost master sleuth Hamilton Drew...

SO WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU, MR. DIBNY?

I'M NOT SURE IF YOU KNOW WHO I AM, MR. DREW...

RALPH DIBNY, THE ELONGATED MAN. I'VE READ ARTICLES ON YOU. IT'S MY DESIRE TO REACQUAINT MYSELF WITH ALL ASPECTS OF THIS NEW ERA I'VE FOUND MYSELF IN.

SO YOU'RE AWARE OF MY ADVENTURES WITH THE JUSTICE LEAGUE?

OF COURSE, BUT THOSE AREN'T THE STORIES I'VE TAKEN THE MOST PLEASURE READING...

"...IT'S YOUR TIMES PLAYING DETECTIVE. YOU ARE INDEED QUITE THE SLEUTH..."

...AND I RAISE MY CHAMOMILE IN SALUTE TO YOU.

A MOMENT OF SILENCE RALPH DRAWS BREATH. SHE, HIS WIFE, GLANCES OVER, AWARE...

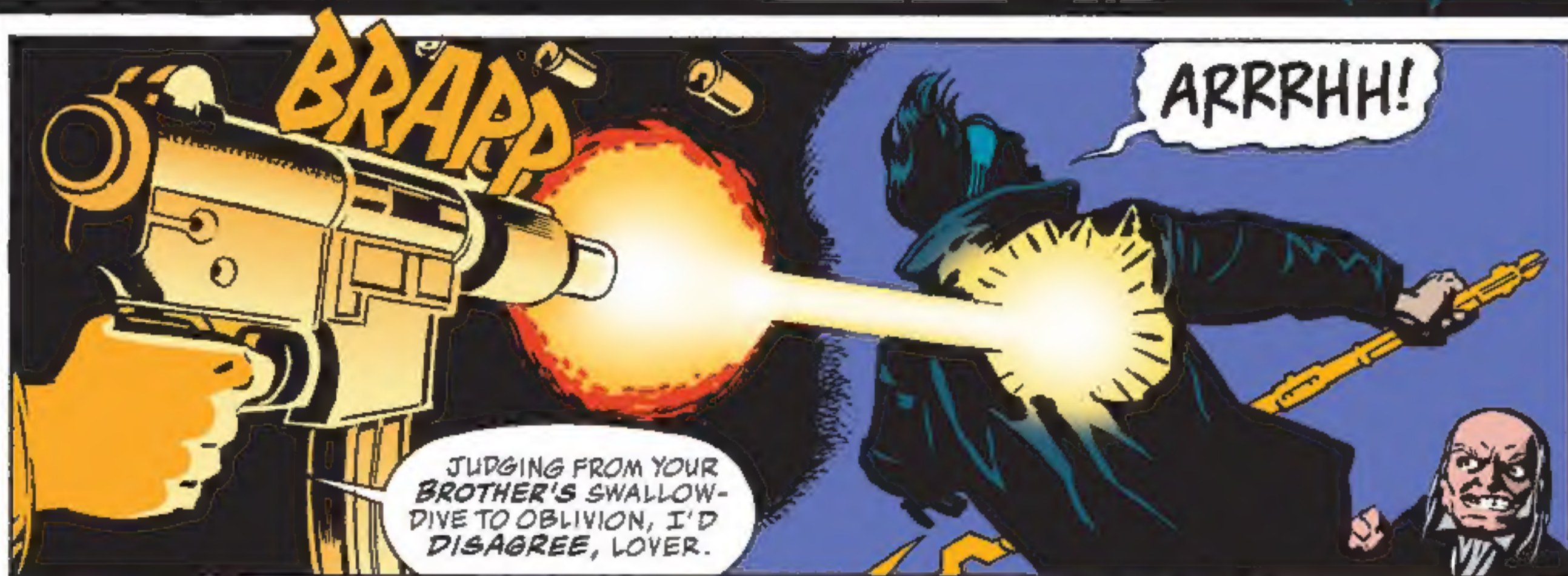
...THAT TEA CUP SALUTE IS PERHAPS THE GREATEST THRILL OF HER HUSBAND'S CAREER.

SO, WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP YOU, RALPH?

IT CONCERNS A CASE YOU WERE ON BEFORE... BEFORE YOU WERE TAKEN AWAY FOR SO LONG

I GUESS THIS WOULD HAVE BEEN ONE OF YOUR VERY LAST CASES. IT CONCERNED A GHOST'S CLAIMS OF HIS OWN INNOCENCE.

JON VALOR, THE BLACK PIRATE. I REMEMBER IT WELL.





WE NEED'A GET OUT
O'OPAL IF WE'RE EVER
GOIN' TA.

WHAT
ABOUT THE
OTHERS?



WHATABOUT'EM?

KILL 'IM
FOR ME, WILL YA?
YOU KNOW YOU
WANT TO. THERE'S
A LUV.



MIST.



SORRY, BABY.
I'M NOT IN
CHARGE THIS
TIME. ORDERS
ARE ORDERS.



MEANWHILE, I'LL CHECK
EVERYTHING'S RIGHT NICELY
WITH THE PIRATE N' WE CAN BE
OFF.



YOU'D LEAVE TOWN
WITHOUT BIDDING ME
A FINAL ADIEU, SIMON?
YOU DISAPPOINT
ME.



It was time...
finally...

... IT'S A
GOOD THING
I CAME TO
YOU.

...time to end it.

I knew it then.

And as I looked into his
eyes I could clearly see...

...so did Culp.

Grand Guignol Onzième Partie

The saga continues with its penultimate chapter, when life or death is the prize for victory or failure. Plus the final battle of the Shade and Simon Culp. And one final twist in

**EVILS OLD, NEW
AND UNEXPECTED**



Deadman Wade

"THIS IS WHAT
AWESOME
LOOKS LIKE".

DCP